

CORNISH ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 20, 2026, 7:00 – 8:30 PM
Cornish Town Offices and via Zoom

ATTENDEES:

In person: CEC members Richard Thompson, Bill Schmidt and Mike Belanger; Stuart Foote (Cornish), Joanna Sharf (Cornish) and Andrew Hatch (Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire)

Via Zoom: CEC Member Myron Kuhre (health); CEC Alternate Frank Parks; and Tony Newton (Cornish) and Doug Cogan (Clean Energy NH)

APPROVAL OF MARCH 2 MINUTES: Mike moved adoption of the minutes and Richard seconded. The minutes were approved.

SULLIVAN COUNTY COMMUNITY POWER LAUNCH: Andrew Hatch from CPCNH joined the meeting to discuss the soft launch of Sullivan County Community Power, which is now available to county residents on an opt-in basis. Interested residents can enroll through the CPCNH website, which provides instructions and information about the various rate levels available. The Clean 100 “opt up” option is available for net metering customers. The Committee agreed to promote this community power option to Cornish residents, and Bill offered to work on a draft communication for Connect Cornish. Andrew also updated the Committee on an ISO New England initiative (the Day-Ahead Ancillary Services Initiative, or DASI) that involved a charge on utilities tied to energy prices. Because of the cold winter, substantial losses have occurred. How these losses will be recouped is not currently clear. Finally, Andrew mentioned pending legislation (HB 1733) in the NH Senate that was intended to restrict spot market purchasing of energy by utilities for residential and small business customers. After passing the House on a bipartisan basis, the current version of the bill in the Senate contains certain exceptions to these restrictions, to be determined by the Public Utilities Commission. The legislation has not been finalized yet.

STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM CLEAN ENERGY NEW HAMPSHIRE: Doug Cogan from CENH provided an update on four currently pending bills in the NH legislature. SB538, which has been endorsed by the Cornish Select Board (20 towns expressed support), would establish 20 year terms for municipal net metering contracts. This term period would make financing more available. Unfortunately, an amendment to the bill cuts the period to 15 years and applies retroactively to contracts that already have a 20 year term. SB 449 would expand to 20 years the terms for commercial net metering contracts. This bill is not likely to move this year. SB 540 would allow use of plug-in or “balcony” solar by residents who are not able to invest in larger solar arrays. Several other states have already passed similar legislation, and this bill is expected to pass with provisions calling for development of safety standards. And HB 1066 would place restrictions on lease financing for renewable energy projects by municipalities. This bill has likely been defeated. The Committee asked Doug to speak about the CPACER program at the next meeting. This NH program facilitates private financing for energy efficiency upgrades for commercial property owners and developers.

UPPER VALLEY ENERGY COMMITTEES MEETING: Joanna mentioned an upcoming meeting of Upper Valley energy committees that is an important forum for connecting with other town energy committees and sharing information about town projects and other issues. The

meeting will be held on June 4th in West Lebanon, and Joanna encouraged Committee participation. Richard indicated he plans to attend and Bill said he would consult his calendar.

ZOOM SUBSCRIPTION: The Committee discussed a Zoom subscription to continue to cover remote participation in Committee meetings and educational webinars. Richard and Bill had discussed a discounted Zoom subscription with the Select Board, but unfortunately, the Zoom discount does not apply to municipalities. Richard indicated that he has personally paid for a subscription (Joanna had done so previously), which the Committee appreciated. Stuart agreed to assist with Zoom call setups for committee meetings and webinars.

COMMUNITY POWER UPDATE STATEMENTS: Joanna reported that the Select Board has approved the short version of the statement, and that it has been posted to the town website. The statement provides residents an update on where things stand with community power. The Committee agreed that the short version was adequate and there was no need for the longer version. Joanna offered to submit the statement to Connect Cornish.

COMMITTEE TASKS ASSIGNMENTS: With Joanna recently stepping down as Chair and as a member of the Committee, assignment of various administrative tasks was discussed:

Town offices key pick-up and return: Richard

Conference room reservations and changes: Richard will make reservations and changes on paper calendar (reservations for 2026 are done)

Minutes: Bill, including sharing with Committee and submission to Heidi

Notice of Committee meetings to Connect Cornish with Zoom link: Susanne

Collecting town energy bill information: Stuart

Laptop for all meetings: Stuart (though other arrangements need to be made for the May meeting)

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Next Meeting: May 4th, 7:00 – 8:30 PM